

completing high school as early as sixth grade. With early intervention, quality teachers, small classes, and data-driven instruction, we can ensure that these students make progress, stay in school and succeed.

Once students reach high school, we must do more to engage them in the learning process. States and cities across the country are already taking steps to address this challenge, such as offering extra help during the school day, extending learning time, and adopting other school-based interventions.

In Massachusetts, Boston public schools are working with private partners to create smaller learning communities, improve instruction, and strengthen professional development for teachers. Our high schools are undergoing a transformation to focus on business, technology, health professions, arts, public service, engineering, sciences, international studies, and social justice. In many of them, students can prepare for future opportunities after they graduate, by enrolling in courses for college credit or pursuing hands-on experience in a career that interests them.

We must all work in Congress to help more districts like Boston mount significant efforts to address these issues and make progress in reducing the dropout rate.

I have joined my colleagues on the HELP Committee—Senator BINGAMAN and Senator BURR—in introducing the Graduation Promise Act, which would fund state efforts that target resources and reforms to turn around high schools with low graduation rates. 15 percent of America's high schools produce half of our dropouts. In these schools—some of which have as many as 400 students in a freshman class—8 out of 10 of the students start high school already having repeated a grade, or are special education students, or are two years or more below grade level.

It's very clear that these schools need more assistance in supporting and retaining these students, and that's what we hope to provide.

We must also do more to better connect schools with the communities around them, and provide the safety-net of services that at-risk students need to help them stay in school. The Keeping PACE Act would provide federal funds for these efforts.

Supporting the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of our youth is a key strategy for breaking down the barriers to learning.

Finally, in order to target reforms, we must accurately measure and track graduation rates throughout the country. Today, in some districts, students who leave school are counted as dropouts only if they have registered as dropouts. In other districts, a promise to earn a GED is all it takes to be counted as a "graduate." That's unacceptable. Obtaining reliable data is the only way to identify and target the

level of reform and resources necessary to assist schools struggling with high dropout rates.

We have an obligation to encourage these and other creative reforms in our schools, and provide the support structure and safe harbor needed to present students at-risk from dropping out. But we must also back up these essential reforms with real investments.

Today, the federal investment in education at all levels—especially in the middle and high school grades—is not sufficient. Only 8 percent of students who benefit from the federal investment in Title I are in high school. Ninety-percent of high schools with very low graduation rates have high concentrations of low-income students—but only a quarter of them receive federal assistance. We need to dedicate more resources and support for secondary schools to improve academic achievement and ensure that every student has a fair opportunity to graduate. We need to target our efforts, resources, and ideas for effective reform to the schools that need them most.

As we consider ways to strengthen and advance our national commitment to leave no child behind, we have an opportunity to give teachers, schools, districts and states the support they need to ensure a high-quality education for every student.

We can no longer turn a blind eye to the millions of young people who fall through the cracks. Let us demand more of ourselves. Let us recommit ourselves to the spirit and the principles of excellence and equal opportunity that have shaped our historic commitment to improving public education. Above all, let us commit ourselves to the great goal of making this silent but severe epidemic—America's dropout crisis—a thing of the past.

TRIBUTE TO KATE MARTIN

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I rise to recognize Kate Martin, an intern in my Washington, DC, office, for all of the hard work she has done for me, my staff, and the State of South Dakota over the past several months.

Kate is a graduate of Ellendale High School in Ellendale, ND. Currently she is attending the University of North Dakota, where she is majoring in marketing and is pursuing a minor in international business. She is also active in her sorority Kappa Alpha Theta. She is a hard worker who has been dedicated to getting the most out of her internship experience.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Kate for all of the fine work she has done and wish her continued success in the years to come.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING THE BRIGHT STAR RESTAURANT

• Mr. SHELBY. Mr. President, I wish to honor the Bright Star Restaurant, one of my favorites in Bessemer, AL. The Bright Star celebrated its 100th anniversary last week on May 2, 2007.

I know from personal experience that the Bright Star has endured for a century due to its excellent menu. Though the restaurant has grown from a cafe that served only 25 people to its current size, seating 330 people, the quality of the food has not changed a bit. I attribute this fact to Bill and Pete Koikos, the family-owned restaurant's patriarchs. Bill and Pete immigrated to the United States from Greece in 1923. Two years later they purchased ownership interest in the restaurant. Since 1966, Bill's sons Jim and Nick have owned and operated the business very successfully.

Jim and Nick Koikos are hard workers who are nearly always in the restaurant greeting customers as they walk through the door. Jim and Nick's dedication to keeping customers happy, along with their wonderful menu, account for the Bright Star's longevity.

Although the menu has a wide assortment of delicious dishes, I am partial to the seafood, which is always fresh from the gulf. My personal favorite is the excellent Greek snapper, thought their special gumbo, not to mention the lemon pie, are also stand-outs.

For the last 100 years, the Bright Star has been one of the best restaurants in the South. The emphasis on quality food and service has not changed since the restaurant was founded in 1907, and I sincerely congratulate the Koikos brothers on their anniversary and wish them continued success.●

COMMENDING PAT SEAMANS WALKER

• Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I commend an outstanding Arkansan on her birthday for her truly amazing gifts to the State of Arkansas. Mrs. Pat Seamans Walker, a Springdale resident, has always been a leader in Arkansas philanthropy by providing donations for many worthwhile causes, especially healthcare, education and human service organizations.

Mrs. Walker and her late husband Willard founded the Willard and Pat Walker Charitable Foundation in 1986. Since that time, their generosity has touched the lives of thousands of Arkansans. Mrs. Walker is a member of the Foundation Board for the Arkansas Cancer Research Center, and an active member of First Christian Church of Springdale. She also participates in the oversight of the Walker Charitable Foundation.

Pat Walker has received many awards in recognition of her philanthropy, including the 2002 American Heart Association Tiffany Award, the Distinguished Services Award from the Razorback Foundation, the prestigious Arkansas Children's Award, and the University of Arkansas Medical School Distinguished Services Award. She has been recognized as one of the Most Distinguished Women in Arkansas and was named to the Top 100 Women in Arkansas list by Arkansas Business in 1999.

The Willard and Pat Walker Charitable Foundation has made countless donations over the years, including millions to educational institutions in Arkansas, millions to healthcare research and community health centers in Arkansas, and the hundreds of thousands of dollars to build libraries in Arkansas.

I would like to personally thank Mrs. Walker and the members of the Walker family for their unwavering support of the State of Arkansas. It is an honor to stand here before you today and wish such a remarkable person a happy birthday.●

F-117'S ARRIVAL AT HOLLOMAN AIR FORCE BASE

● Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I wish to commemorate the arrival of the first F-117 Nighthawk fighters at Holloman Air Force Base, NM, 15 years ago today.

On May 9, 1992, with the arrival of its first four F-117s at Holloman Air Force Base, the 49th fighter wing became the sole operator of the F-117. The F-117 was the world's first stealth aircraft and is still one of the world's most advanced fighters. Since that date the men and women of the 49th have flown the F-117 with distinction throughout the world. In 1999 the F-117s of the 49th deployed in support of Operation Allied Force, and flew more than 1,000 missions against heavily defended targets in Serbia. The 49th also played a key role in the opening hours of Operation Iraqi Freedom, attacking critical leadership targets.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those at Holloman for keeping the F-117 flying, and for their service to our Nation. I am proud New Mexico has been the home to this amazing aircraft and the outstanding individuals who fly them.●

CONGRATULATING DALE B. ENGQUIST

● Mr. LUGAR. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate fellow Hoosier Dale B. Engquist who will be recognized today with the Department of the Interior's Distinguished Service Award honoring his leadership with the National Park Service as superintendent of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Under Dale's leadership the Lakeshore has undergone remarkable changes, including a 15 percent in-

crease in the size of the area being preserved. Dale has also developed an environmental education program that currently serves over 35,000 students per year. Recently Dale worked closely with local and State leaders to design and build the new Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center, a shared resource which welcomes the two million visitors from Indiana and across the nation who come each year to learn about and enjoy the precious natural ecosystem along the southern tip of Lake Michigan which spans northwest Indiana.

I look forward to each opportunity to be with Dale and to learn about the many initiatives he and his staff have undertaken to preserve and share the spectacular beauty of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. I am certain that in the coming years the staff of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore will continue Dale's important work to preserve this resource for generations to come.

I congratulate Dale on his recent retirement following a career dedicated to public service, and wish him and his wife JoAnn good health and happiness as they embark upon this new chapter in their lives, together.●

CONGRATULATING ALBERT YARNELL

● Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, in 1932 Ray Yarnell bought a bankrupt dairy in Searcy, AR, and created the Yarnell Ice Cream Company. At the time, there were 43 ice cream companies in business in Arkansas.

Ray's son Albert began working for the company at the age of 12, riding his bicycle to deliver bills. During World War II, Albert Yarnell left to serve his country as a member of the Army Signal Corps. After his service, he studied dairy production at the University of Missouri and returned to work at the Yarnell Ice Cream Company in 1948. With the passing of his father in 1974, Albert Yarnell became the president of the company. In 1978, he personally created the Nation's first all-natural ice milk, and after becoming chairman of the company in 1985, he led the team that invented the Nation's first non-fat, no-sugar-added ice cream in 1990. He is affectionately known in his hometown of Searcy and at the company as "Mr. Albert."

A very successful family business, the Yarnell Ice Cream Company now stands as the only remaining ice cream producer in Arkansas. Albert's son Rogers is the current president of the company and Albert's granddaughter Christina is the treasurer. Albert and his wife Doris both contribute to and are deeply respected in the community they have called home for so many years. Mr. Yarnell also serves on several boards, including Main Street Searcy, the Baptist Health Corporation, the Searcy Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce.

Earlier this year, Albert Yarnell was inducted into the Arkansas Business Hall of Fame. He joins other distinguished members such as Sam Walton, Jackson Stephens, Don Tyson, and J.B. Hunt.

Mr. President, I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating both Albert Yarnell, the patriarch of the Ice Cream Industry, and the Yarnell Ice Cream Company on the company's 75th anniversary.●

HONORING THE INN AT LONG SANDS

● Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, today I wish to honor and recognize a small business from my home State that has triumphed over adversity in the wake of several major coastal storms. The Inn at Long Sands in York Beach, ME, suffered extensive damage as the result of a devastating storm on Mother's Day weekend of May 2006. With Memorial Day weekend approaching, signaling the unofficial beginning of summer—a busy time for York County's tourism industry—Arline Shea, the Inn's co-owner watched countless hotel and meal reservations get washed away. As a result of the storm, the Inn sustained over \$100,000 in damage. This was not a welcome beginning for Arline, who had just purchased the Inn in February 2006.

Although the storm dealt Arline a heavy blow, she exemplified Maine's entrepreneurial spirit by reopening in a matter of weeks. To recover from the damage the Inn had sustained, Arline wisely made good use of the tools available to small businesses in the wake of disasters. She contacted the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Small Business Administration to find out what kinds of assistance she would be able to receive. Arline's exemplary decision to find out what help was available to her, along with her hard work and dedication, allowed her to reopen the Inn and Long Sands in time for last year's Fourth of July holiday.

Despite all of the tragedy that befell Arline Shea and her employees, her optimistic spirit shined through just a month following the storm, when the Portsmouth Herald interviewed her for a story on the recovery from the storm. "Nobody died," Arline said. "We all have our health. That and the ice cream cone I have every day from the Village Scoop helps," she added with good humor. Arline displayed an entrepreneurial spirit, combined with a sense of humor, that allowed her to prevail following the devastation.

Unfortunately, the nightmare did not stop there for Arline. Just last month, Maine suffered, as did most of the east coast, a crippling storm, known to Mainers as the "Patriots Day Storm." This time, however, Arline was prepared for the storm, with sandbags and new sump pumps. Because of the lessons learned—and her preparation—Arline sustained minimal damage from